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ABSTRACT

This paper discusses a reorganization plan for the University of Vermont. Faculty, students, and community groups were asked to define educational and related competencies in a futures perspective within a community context and to define new organizational patterns to achieve new missions and functions. Seven recommended changes are discussed, and competencies and knowledge areas are presented. Some implications for community development are discussed, and the need for a matrix organization that creates the opportunity for fluidity of personnel rather than rigid classifications is stressed. A model of one possible matrix approach is presented. The author concludes that the fundamental purpose of education is to create people with the kind of values which will be appropriate for the future; and to do this successfully, educators must have an image of what the world is going to be like, so that they can work to develop appropriate values for this world. (PD)

ED 097308

THE UNIVERSITY REORGANIZES FOR HUMAN SERVICES

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University of Vermont

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I. System Change

At the University of Vermont we are in the midst of a unique opportunity; we reached a nexus after four years of labor wherein many individuals who are part of a variety of subsystems have committed themselves to a common goal. The goal is to redefine the missions and functions of each of the subsystems to provide an integrated delivery system for matching human services with community needs. The time has come to detribalize. Community people, some leaders from a variety of human service agencies, and some faculty and administrators from each of the five colleges within the university have clearly realized the human waste inherent in our current delivery of human services to meet individual and community needs.

In September, 1972, the president of our university announced that he was appointing a task force of faculty and students who would consult within and outside of the university and then recommend to him by December 1, 1972 a reorganization plan for the university, following which there would be four months of open dialogue and a final plan which would be presented to the Trustees in their April, 1973 meeting. So began the blitz kreig or system break.

Shortly thereafter, the College of Education decided it was time, after three years, to reexamine its mission and functions from a futures perspective, and thereby set three types of groupings to do so:

1. Intensified study within each of the current program areas by faculty and students.

2. Clusters of randomly selected faculty and students comprising five community groups.

3. A communications task force made up of one faculty member from each of the seven existing program areas.

Each of these groups were charged with:

1. Defining educational and related competencies in futures perspective within a community context.

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2. Defining new organizational patterns to achieve new missions and functions.

II. Assumptions

Having set the stage, let us take a minute to note the assumptions about change, and, specifically, change in a university that is part of the aforegoing plan:

1. Major system change or system break requires a disequilibrium in all directly related subsystems simultaneously. In this instance the force for change was set in motion at the all-university level, at the college level, and at the program level --all reinforced by the university's suprasystem--the state and its communities. Therefore in such a disequilibrium one must respond; with all the sands moving, one must move.

2. Most universities today are structured according to a classification system that clearly represents the past, not the present, much less the future. Our current organizational structures assume that reality is represented by isolated, discrete bodies of knowledge.

   Bertrand deJouvenal, a philosopher and futurist, defines the problem thusly:

   > "Government projections show what it is doing, wants to do, or has done--but bad results are not made public."[1]

   He goes on to conclude:

   > "We need maps of the present. And we need maps of possible futures. But such maps will always be a function of information, and information will always be a function of what people have chosen to look at."[2]

3. Universities, because of their structure and the behaviors it predetermines, have not helped students to integrate and synthesize their learning, or to link knowledge with problem solving.

4. University education and training in the human service areas has been uncoordinated; each area has assumed its knowledge and competencies are distinct from other like areas. This

isolation has in turn repeated itself in communities and agencies. Most community people have long seen the fallacy and elitism in these distinctions.

5. The future clearly indicates the need for a continuous learning society for purposes of self-actualization and for multiple-career options.

6. As one examines the competencies needed in the delivery of any of the human service areas, it is clear that the specific organizational setting has only a limited effect upon the competency itself.

7. Education must be redefined, beyond just rhetoric, to be a total community function and a life-long process, with or without schools.

   Long ago Aristotle noted: "The state. . . is a plurality, which should be united and made into a community by education."

   Recently, Robert McClintock asked:

   > "Could a community provide the institutional resources to make possible universal, comprehensive, life-long, voluntary study for its people, resources by which each person would throughout his life find open to him a real opportunity to study any subject that he should choose up to the highest level he could master?"[3]

III. Specific Changes

We are now rapidly approaching the April deadline in Vermont. Let me share with you some of the changes that will most likely occur at the university; this will be a sampling only.

1. The College of Technology, the College of Agriculture, and a few related departments in the College of Arts and Sciences will be reconstituted into a Division of Applied Sciences which will contain three or four subgroupings; one of the most exciting will be a School of Natural Resources made up of the previous departments in forestry, civil engineering, and resource economics.

2. This new division and the College of Education and Human Resources will not be organized with departments, but rather on

programs. I will say more about this later.

3. All colleges within the university must clearly articulate their objectives for teaching, research and service, and the relationships between each of these functions. Community-based activities in all these areas will be encouraged and supported.

4. The College of Education will become the College of Education and Human Resources and will add the faculty and students from social welfare, early childhood education, and human development.

5. Currently the programs in the college are teacher education, special education, reading, counseling, student personnel services in higher education, and administration and planning.

   (a) Teacher education, special education, physical education, reading, early childhood education, and human development will become the learning specialties area. Some of the key concepts that will guide the development of this area are:

      (1) The mission will be to prepare a variety of learning specialists for the helping professions.

      (2) Some of the key helping professions areas include:

         --Education for the elderly
         --Leisure time education
         --Rehabilitation teaching
         --Alternative schools
         --Drug education
         --Environmental education
         --Adolescent community centers
         --Human potential centers
         --Day care and primary school centers
         --Teaching in industry
         --Family education

      (3) One of the tasks is to convert the present faculty to learning specialists whose skills, knowledge, attitudes and experiences will enable them to prepare students in a variety of human service areas.

      (4) Subunits within this program such as the American

primary school, will be temporary systems to meet specified needs based on community need, student interest, and faculty competence.

(5) Each subunit will focus on some particular teaching-learning interaction among professionals and clients in a particular human service area.

(6) Each subunit will be comprised of a small team of faculty and students involved in both on-campus and in-community activity.

(7) Curriculums will be revised so as to:

a. Reduce course requirements
b. Create block options
c. Focus on contractual study and independent study experiences
d. Have each curriculum integrate theory and applied field experiences
e. Dissolve most of the distinctions between underclassmen, upperclassmen, undergraduate, and graduate students

(b) The past areas of administration and planning, community education development, counseling, guidance, student personnel services, and social welfare will be reconstituted into a program in organizational and human resource development.

Competencies and Knowledge Areas

The planning, development, and delivery of a variety of human services require common competencies. The competencies represented by this program will be treated as a bank of options which can be delivered through a variety of facilitators: courses, seminars, modules, independent study, laboratory practicums, internships, etc.

The following is a summary of the general competencies and knowledge areas that will be represented by this program:

COMPETENCIES	KNOWLEDGE AREAS
Counseling	Theories of individual and group change
Planning	Organizational theory
Administration	Theories of individual and group counseling
Systems Analysis	General systems theory
Organizational Analysis	Political processes
Educational program development	Communication
Organizational development	Futuristics
Community development	Organizational development
Communications	Theories of learning and human development
Group dynamics	Personality development and mental health
Advocacy	Analysis of social systems:
Consulting	Schools
Coordination	Colleges
Policy analysis	Government agencies
Dissemination skills	Hospitals
Research	Families
Evaluation	Communities
Individual appraisal	Correctional facilities
	Mental health agencies
	Other social service agencies

Ultimately the broader classification suggested by the new program will afford graduating students additional professional career options in schools, colleges, governmental and social agencies, hospitals, correctional facilities and other social service organizations and agencies.

IV. Implications for Community Development

Paulo Freire notes:

> "There is no such thing as a neutral educational process. Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes 'the practice of freedom'--the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world."[4]

It is our belief that new models of higher education must provide students and faculty members the opportunity to experience this transformation both on campus and in communities.

Some of us, faculty and students, have had the opportunity for the past three years to work in depth with two poor, bilingual rural communities. We have been able to bear out our assumptions of:

1. Communities do not neatly sort their problems according to categories labeled anthropology, history, biology, etc. They are well aware of the integrated nature of community problems and planning. We fully realize the need for faculty and students from many disciplines to join with us in such endeavors.

2. That communities are the most logical means to provide integration and synthesis experiences for students and faculty.

3. That communities must develop holistically. No longer can we separately plan for education, health, social services, and economic development. Each part of the community is vitally linked to every other part.

4. The role of university faculty and students is to learn and to facilitate community development, not to manipulate or make decisions for the community. We can provide:

   (a) Some expertise, information, and documentation for decision-making alternatives.

   (b) Coordination, facilitation and training for participants in the process.

(c) Analysis of data collection and implications for possible decision choices.

5. The primary means for community development are extensive dialogue, analysis, and actions. Every person is capable of critically reflecting upon his or her world in a dialogical encounter with others.

6. Planners must be facilitators. They must have faith in all the people and they must not predetermine the outcomes of the planning process.

7. The planners or facilitators must become obsolete and the community must become self-directive.

Regarding the use of knowledge and university talent in communities, Benjamin DeMott has noted:

> "What they are doing, in effect, is offering certain skills and a place in which those skills could be learned and tested by people, who may or may not have them--people of all ages. The skills are skills with which to address a particular social need existing in that community; the need ought not to be defined by other people in the university but by the people there on the block."[5] Amen.

V. Need for Matrix Organization

One concluding concept that we will develop extensively over the next two years is to transform the university into a matrix organization. This development is strongly implicit in our current reorganization plan and is our movement away from departmental structures; but in order to completely detribalize this, one further step is needed.

A matrix organization stresses the notion of temporary system structures that bring together interdisciplinary resources to achieve specific program objectives; it creates the opportunity for fluidity of personnel rather than rigid classifications.

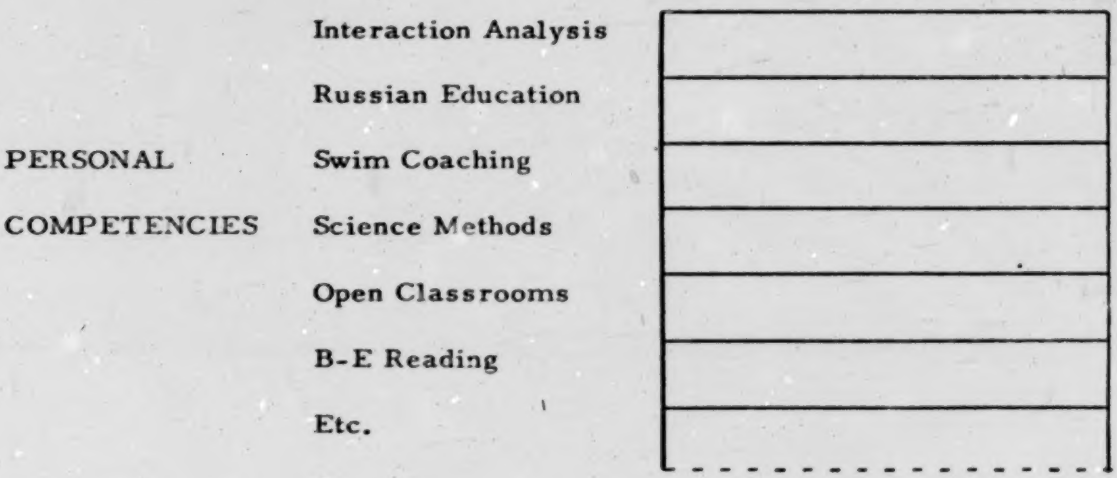
Let me give you an example of one possible matrix approach that has been developed in our college:

VI. Learning Specialities Reorganization Model[6]

Three basic ideas underly the model for change. First is the notion

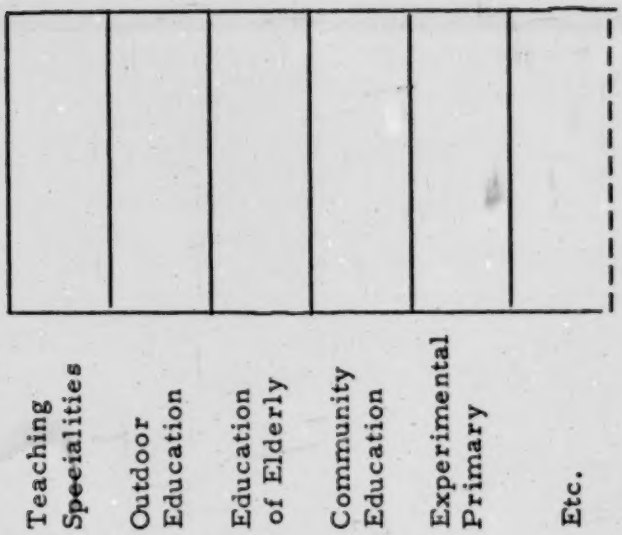
that the person and his interests, skills, and talents are what is most important in building any new program of study. Our best resource is ourselves. Bureaucratic concentration on programs and "needed courses" tends to limit the opportunity for one to express and develop their competencies. A person may have skill in classroom organization but if that person is programmed into learning and human development, the opportunity to share that skill with others in a systematic way rarely arises. Therefore, the first category represented on the change model is an inventory of the faculty's personal competencies.

The dotted line signifies the flexibility inherent in the model. The dimension of personal competencies may expand or contract as new faculty come into the college or older faculty leave the college. Examples of competencies might be interaction analysis, historical foundations of Russian education, coaching swimming, science methods, open classroom organization, the Bereiter-Englemann approach to reading, etc.



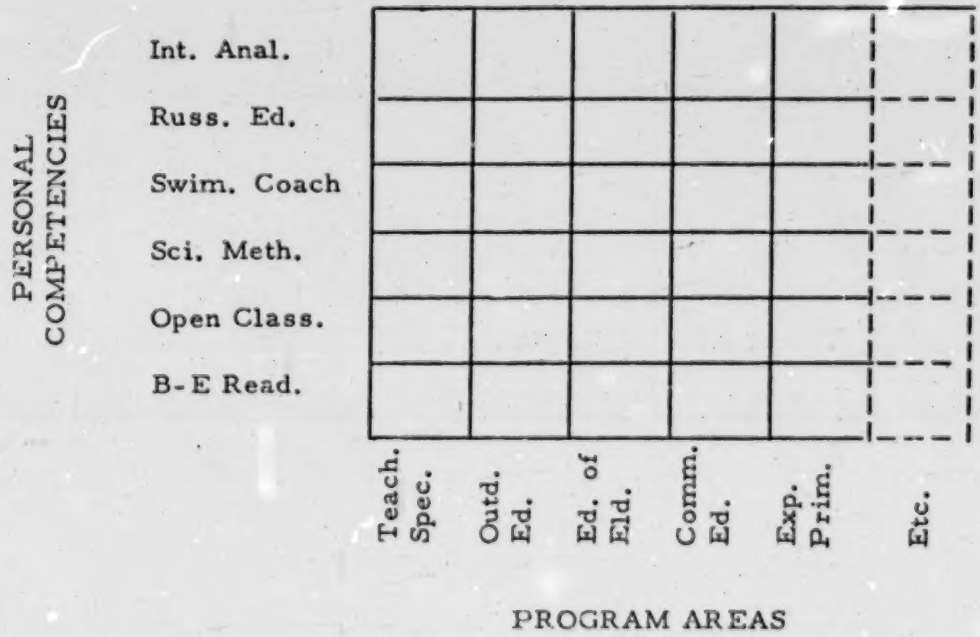
The second notion is that one then builds programs around people with desired competencies. Programs are built to fit people, not vice-versa. Programs are viewed as transitory administrative budget categories organized to fulfill a certain need at a given point in time.

The dotted line again shows the flexibility inherent in the model. Programs may come and go without disruption of the college structure.



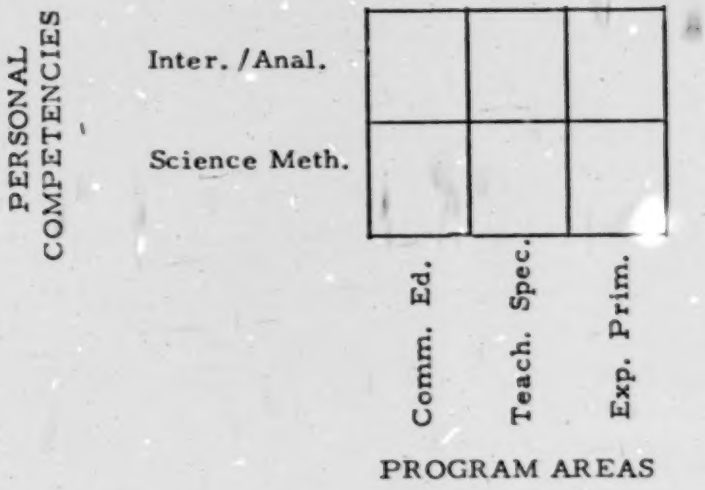
PROGRAM AREAS

Superimpose personal competencies on program areas and matrix or organization is derived. The matrix represents people multiplied by programs.



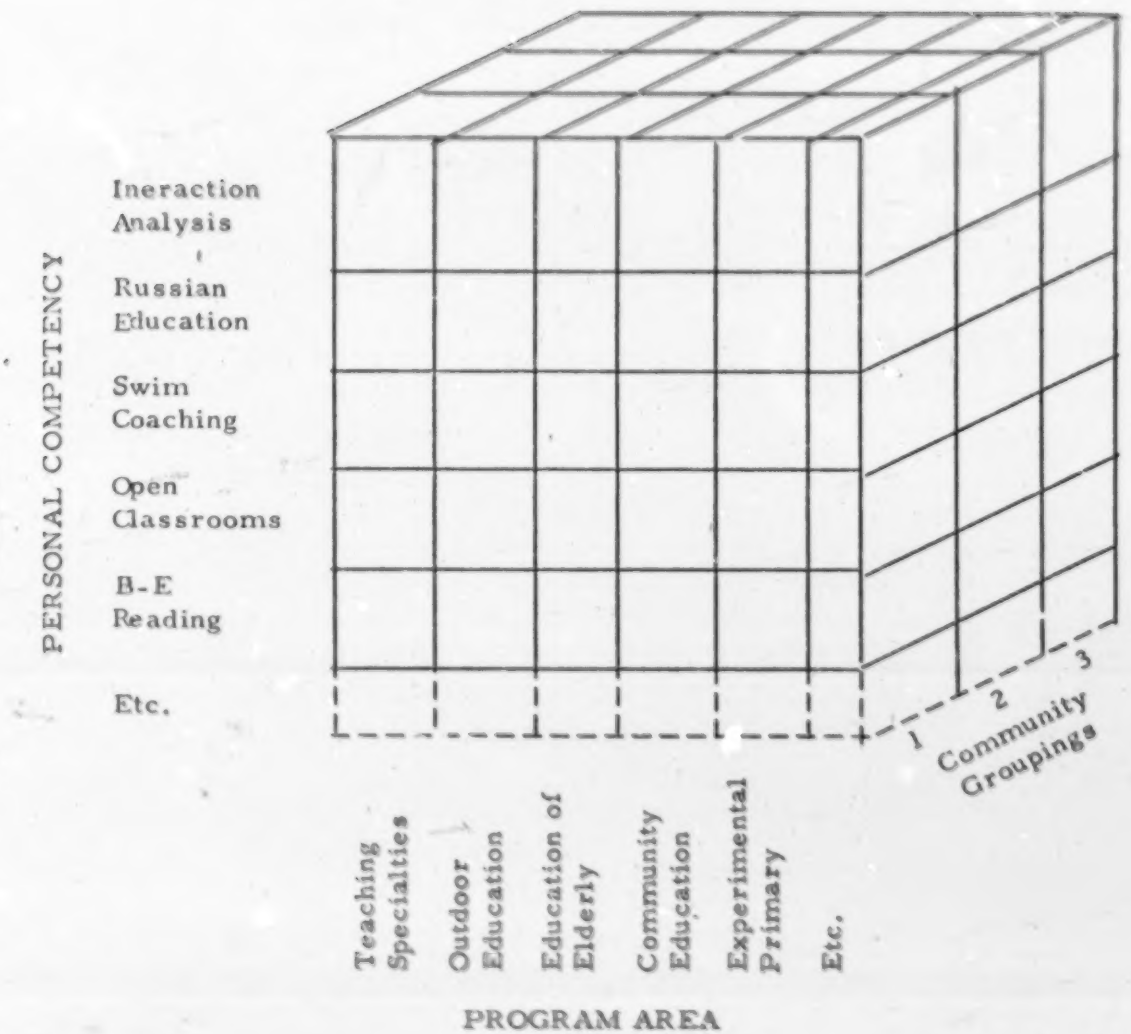
PROGRAM AREAS

A person's individual role in the college, related to teaching, might be represented thusly:



Finally, the matrix organization thus represented would not give a cross-fertilized communication flow across programs in the college. People would communicate within program areas but cross program sharing would be hard to accomplish with the system outlined so far. Therefore, the notion of small community groupings cutting across both competency and program dimensions was built into the model. Small groups of people would meet informally together, periodically, to share what is occurring in the areas they represent. Their agenda could take other forms as well.

This gives us the final learning specialities reorganization model. (See next page.)


PERSONAL COMPETENCY
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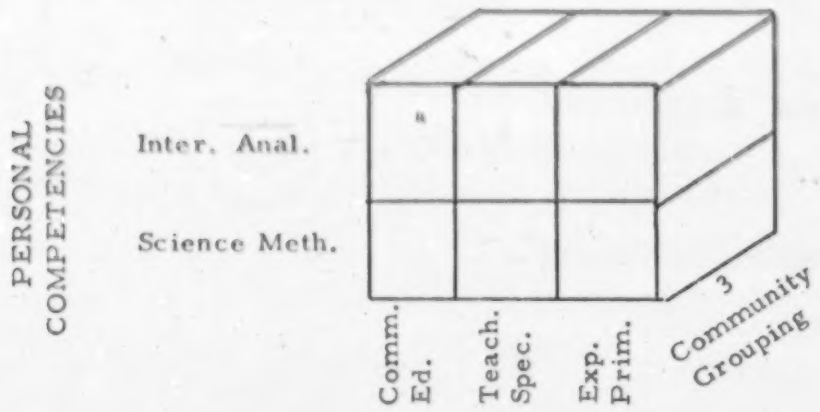
Swim Coaching
Open Classrooms
B-E Reading
Etc.
1
2
3
Community Groupings
Teaching Specialties
Outdoor Education
Education of Elderly
Community Education
Experimental Primary
Etc.
PROGRAM AREA

A person's individual role in the college is now defined with the added dimension of community: Competency(s) superimposed on Programs superimposed on Community Grouping.



submitted by:
Charles Rathbone
1-18-73

VII. Conclusion

For a long time I have felt that universities were in an advanced state of system entropy or death-state. My present experience has given me new hope. Needless to say some groups of faculty and students and agriculturalists are fighting to preserve the status quo, but even they are beginning to realize that the status quo is not one of the choice options.

I would like to conclude by sharing with you a recent statement by Kenneth Boulding:

> ". . . the fundamental purpose of education is to create people, and the question is what kind of people. We as educationists need to have some sort of image of the future, some sort of image of what the world is all about and what the world is going to be like, in order for us to produce an image of the kind of values which will be appropriate for the world ahead."[7]

FOOTNOTES

[1]Bertrand deJouvenal, "Intellectuals and Power," The Center Magazine, Vol. VI, No. 1 (Jan./Feb., 1973), p. 56.

[2]Ibid., p. 56.

[3]Robert McClintock, "Universal Voluntary Study," The Center Magazine, Vol. VI, No. 1, (Jan./Feb., 1973), p. 27.

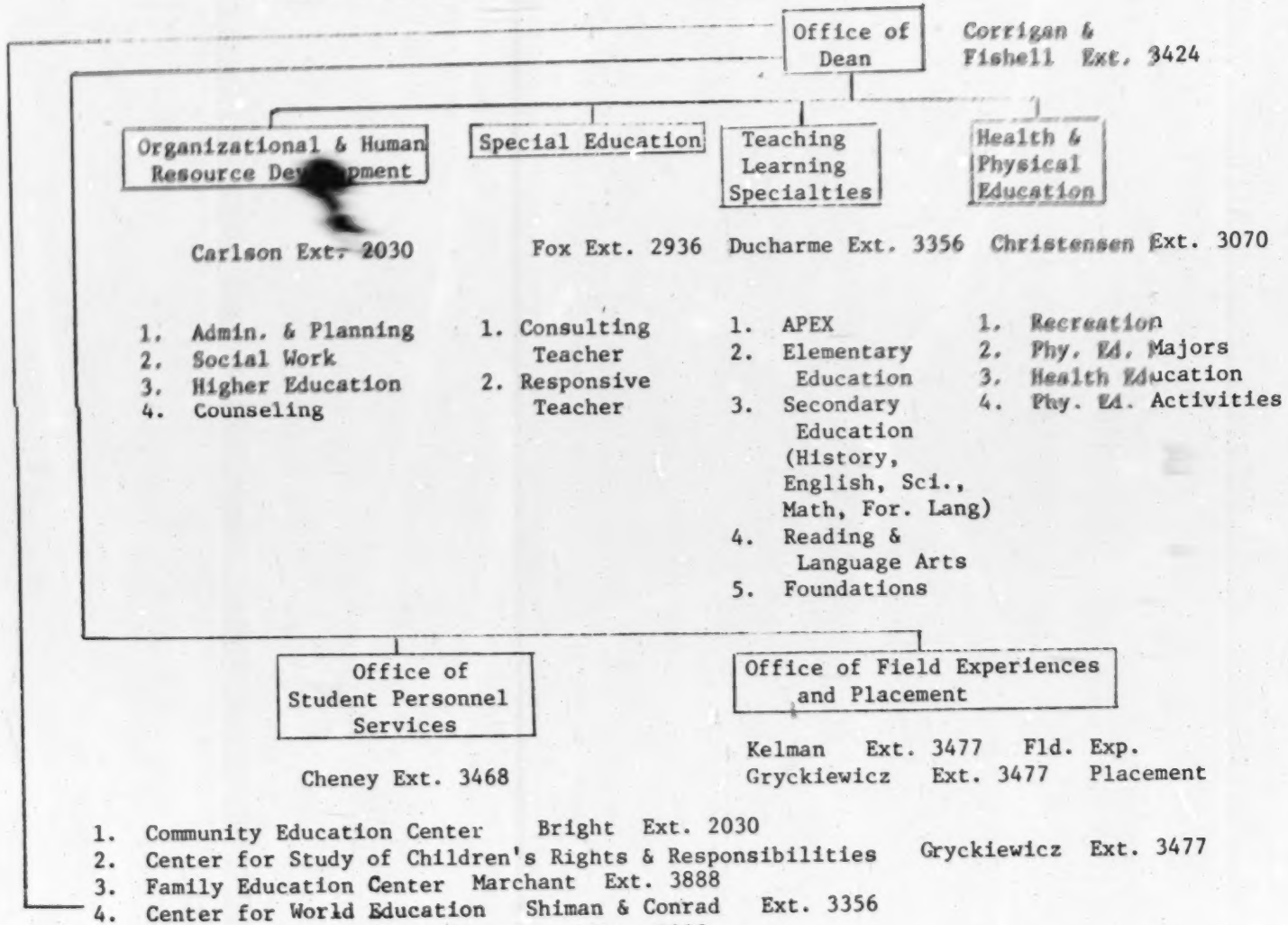
[4]Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), p. 15.

[5]Benjamin DeMott in Of Education and Human Community: A Symposium of Leaders in Experimental Education, Eds. J. Bowman, L. Freeman, P.A. Olson, and J. Pieper (Lincoln, Nebr.: Nebraska Curriculum Development Center, University of Nebraska, 1972), p. 183.

[6]This model was prepared by Dr. Charles Rathbone, University of Vermont, 1973.

[7]Kenneth Boulding, "Education and the Economic Process," in Nothing But Praise: Thoughts on the Ties Between Higher Education and the Federal Government (Lincoln, Nebr.: Study Commission on Undergraduate Education and the Education of Teachers, 1972), pp. 70-71.

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND SOCIAL SERVICES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